



West Virginia Department of Agriculture

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COVID-19 GUIDANCE & FAQ's: Farmers Markets & On-Farm Markets Issue Date:06/28/2021

NOTE: Given the fluidity of the current situation, this and further guidance is subject to change and/or amendments at any time. Readers are advised to check for new legislative updates and a revised WVDA vendor guide in accordance with changes.

06/15/2021 Update: New CDC issued guidelines do not require face coverings to be worn in public places for people who have waited two weeks after receiving the final dose of COVID-19 vaccine. Patrons and vendors who are not fully vaccinated should continue to wear face coverings.

Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

Farmers markets and on-farm markets are encouraged to adhere to the following guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Be prepared at the Market before Customers Arrive:

- Consider putting up signs and information on websites and social media to explain any changes, delivery options, or extra precautions taken to limit exposure to COVID-19.
- Package cheese and eggs for customers, even if the cheese and eggs are individually packaged. Open egg cartons for customers so they may inspect the eggs.
- Separate vendor stands at least six feet apart, if possible, to limit crowds
- Remove tablecloths and sanitize tables regularly.
- Provide additional handwashing stations and/or hand sanitizer. It is recommended to use disposables towels with soap and water.

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Food Sampling at Farmers Markets:

Food sampling can once again be offered at WV Farmers Markets with the following requirements:

- Food samples are pre-portioned into individual containers by the vendor
- The vendor must wear gloves when offering samples. For vendors who are not fully vaccinated, masks are still required.
- Adequate trash receptacles are provided to dispose of waste
- No “dipping” will be allowed into a single container
- Food samples are shielded from patron traffic

Have all Staff be Prepared to Direct their Vendors and the Public:

- Reinforce all health and safety precautions to all vendors. It is the duty of the market to help and support the safety and health of all participants.
- Provide guidance for handwashing (liked time intervals) and handling materials.
- All sick employees need to stay at home. Employees should not return until they have obtained guidance from a health care official.
- Inform employees where they can find sanitizing materials throughout on-farm contact points.

Sanitize contact surfaces:

- Frequently disinfect all door handles and knobs, credit card machines, shopping baskets, etc. at a regular pre-established time interval.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch smartphones and smart devices.
- Frequently sanitize common gathering places – restrooms, etc.

If you are relocating a farmers market temporarily due to COVID-19, the WVDA will not need to issue a new farmers market permit. If your market is permanently relocating, please contact farmersmarkets@wvda.us.

Currently, there is no evidence of food being associated with the transmission of COVID-19. To prevent a foodborne illness, it is still critical to follow the 4 key steps of food safety- clean, separate, cook, and chill. For more information on food safety and COVID-19, please visit the FDA at <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>.

The FDA has offered Information for consumers when shopping for food during the COVID-19 pandemic. This can be found at <https://www.fda.gov/media/137009/download>

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Q. Should we take temperature of employees prior to harvesting or selling to public?

A. At this time, you should ensure your employees are feeling well before engaging the public.

Q. Can I sell meat, poultry and fish at a farmers market?

A. For vendors who wish to sell meat, poultry, and fish at farmers markets, the vendor must obtain both a farmers market vendor permit, a meat & poultry distributor's license from the WVDA, as well as a food establishment permit from the county health department in which the product is sold.

The farmers market vendor permit application form may be found at:

<https://agriculture.wv.gov/divisions/regulatoryandenvironmental/Farmers-Markets/Documents/Farmers%20market%20vendor%20permit%20application%20form%202020.pdf>

The meat & poultry distributor's license application form may be found at:

<https://agriculture.wv.gov/forms/formsmeatpoul/Pages/default.aspx>

Local Health Departments:

<https://dhhr.wv.gov/localhealth/pages/map.aspx>

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